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ABSTRACT

The focus of this teacher's packet is the bronze vessels made for the kings and great families of the early Chinese dynasties between 1700 B.C. and 200 A.D. The materials in the guide are intended for use by teachers and students visiting the exhibition, "The Arts of China," at the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. The packet, however, is also designed to be used independent of the exhibition and by those not visiting the museum. Using ancient Chinese bronzes as examples, these materials address the relationship between art history and archeology, and two major themes: objects as historical documents and artistic choices. The packet contains the following sections: map, background information for teachers, pre-visit activities for students, looking at slides, gallery activities, post-visit activities, selected bibliography, selected films and videos, glossary and pronunciation guide, and chronology. (DB)

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Ancient Chinese Bronzes

SO 022 023

This teacher's packet was developed in association with the exhibition *The Arts of China* at the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, and was made possible in part by the generous support of The Boeing Company.

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Introduction

The focus of this packet is the bronze vessels made for the kings and great families of the early Chinese dynasties between 1700 B.C. and A.D. 200. The packet provides teachers with background information on the bronzes and offers materials that may be used independently of the exhibition or in conjunction with a visit to the museum.

An understanding of who made ancient Chinese bronzes, why they were made, and how they were used goes hand in hand with an understanding of ancient Chinese society. Knowledge of this comes from archaeological investigation and art historical analysis. Archaeological investigations can provide dates and locations for objects recovered from controlled excavations. Art historians can subsequently attribute dates and regional styles for similar vessels not found in excavations. Art historical analysis of stylistic changes in vessel shapes and designs may indicate developments in bronze-casting technology; stylistic and regional differences among vessels may relate to trade routes or the degree of isolation of a particular region.

Using the ancient Chinese bronzes, the packet addresses two major themes: **objects as historical document** and **artistic choices.** A book symbol designates those activities that address objects as historical document; activities marked with a paintbrush deal with artistic choices. You may wish to explore only one of these themes with your students, but the relationship between art history and archaeology will best be revealed if you are able to address both.

Objects as Historical Document

Careful examination of objects can reveal much about the social and political life of the societies that fostered them. Archaeological investigation provides vital evidence about societies lacking any written records or for which little or no written records survive. The bronze vessels created in China during the Bronze Age (1700 B.C.–A.D. 200) are a major source of information about the period. Inscriptions cast inside some of the vessels give accounts of historical events and provide key information about the society. Archaeological excavations have revealed the context in which objects were found, their groupings, and relationships. This information may suggest how, why, and by whom the objects were used. The activities and slides in this packet show how through careful examination one can learn much about the society from which an object comes. It is important to note, however, that one can gain an in-depth understanding of a culture only when information about the context in which the objects were used is available.

Artistic Choices

When an artist creates a work of art s/he must decide what to create and whether the work will be purely functional or purely decorative, or will combine elements of both. An artist selects and modifies standard shapes, motifs, and patterns in an attempt to create an object that fulfills his/her notions of function and aesthetics. The success or failure of a piece may be judged by the artist alone or by the standards of the wider society. Previsit materials are designed to spark classroom discussion about the role of the artist and his/her ability to modify standard cultural forms. Classroom activities include images of the ancient Chinese bronze vessels to help students understand the interrelationship of form, function, and decoration.

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Please Note

The pinyin system is used to romanize Chinese words throughout the packet. Introduced by the Chinese in the 1950s, pinyin has now largely replaced the older Wade-Giles romanization system and the place-name spellings given in the *Postal Atlas of China*. Wade-Giles spellings are found in older publications. Listed below are some common names you may encounter.

Dynasties

Pinyin	*Wade-Giles*
Zhou	Chou
Qin	Ch'in
Tang	T'ang
Song	Sung
Yuan	Yuan
Qing	Ch'ing

Place-Names

Pinyin	*Wade-Giles*	*Postal Atlas*
Beijing	Pei-ching	Peking
Shanghai	Shang-hai	Shanghai
Guangdong	Kuang-tung	Kwangtung

Ancient Chinese Bronzes

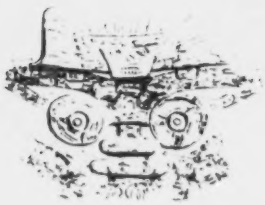
Background Information for Teachers

The arts of ancient China span a period of about four thousand years, beginning from about the fourth millennium B.C. to the third century A.D. Included is the period often referred to as the Bronze Age, which encompasses the historic dynasties of Shang (ca. 1700–ca. 1050 B.C.), Western Zhou (ca. 1050–771 B.C.), Eastern Zhou (771–221 B.C.), and Qin and Han (221 B.C.–A.D. 220).

Most of the ancient Chinese bronze vessels were used in religious, court, or burial rituals. Prized symbols of social and political status, they represent the taste and demands of exacting patrons, primarily the ruling house and other powerful members of society. Only toward the end of the first millennium B.C. did bronze vessels come to perform a secular function and enjoy a broader distribution in society.

It is a measure of ancient Chinese society's high regard for these bronze artifacts that they were buried with their owners. Through their fortuitous preservation, often in carefully constructed tombs, the objects provide us with invaluable glimpses into the artistic, technical, historical, and social developments of ancient China.

Historical Overview



Late Neolithic Period
(ca. 5000–ca. 1700 B.C.)

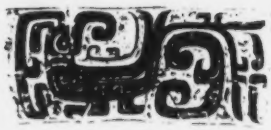
There is evidence that people lived in China about a million years ago, starting with Homo erectus. Chinese civilization grew up around three rivers: the Xi Jiang (West River) in the south; the Yangzi, the world's third longest river, in central China; and the Huang He (Yellow River) in the north. In the wide valleys of the three rivers lie most of China's farmland and its cities and towns.

During the late Neolithic period, so named because it is characterized by the use of polished stone tools, populations slowly shifted from those of hunter-gatherers to settled, less migratory communities. About 3,800 years ago, China had already entered the Bronze Age, and people were making a variety of implements with bronze, constructing houses of sun-dried mud bricks, and making delicate, highly glazed pottery. There are stories of a dynasty known as Xia. Chinese history tells of a series of emperors who performed magical feats and possessed great powers. These figures were probably based on real people, but as yet no traces of the Xia have been found. Evidence from archaeological excavations suggests that the people of the northwest plain and the southeast coast all practiced ritual burials and believed in an afterlife. In contrast, the people of the northeast seem to have practiced ancestor worship.

Shang Dynasty
(ca. 1700–ca. 1050 B.C.)

The Shang is the first dynasty for which there are written records in China. The earliest writing is found on oracle bones, used in divination and on bronze vessels. Shang society was stratified by rank, status, and occupation, with the clearest differentiation between the commoners and the nobles. A noble was distinctive in that he belonged to a clan and as such was required to worship his ancestors. Bronze vessels were used in ancestor worship and burial customs, and many of the vessels survive today because they were buried.

Anyang, south of present-day Beijing, is undisputedly recognized as the site of the ancient Shang capital, which dates from the thirteenth century B.C. until the dynasty's fall in the eleventh century B.C. Excavations near Anyang since the 1930s have revealed large numbers of royal burials, but it was only in 1976 that the first undisturbed tomb of a named royal personage was opened.



Western Zhou Dynasty
(ca. 1050–771 B.C.)

Sometime around 1050 B.C. one of the Shang's neighboring peoples in the west emerged from their homeland along the Wei River valley in present-day Shaanxi Province and overran the Shang capital at Anyang. They established a new dynasty called Zhou (1050–221 B.C.). The Zhou adopted many of the customs and rituals performed by their Shang predecessors, but they inaugurated a feudal age by parceling out among their relatives and allies the territories they had conquered during the defeat of the Shang. The Zhou built their capital in their western home, near modern Xi'an. But in 771 B.C. marauding nomads from the steppes forced the Zhou kings to abandon Xi'an and flee to their secondary capital farther east, in present-day Luoyang. There, Zhou kings held court until their final fall to the Qin emperor in 256 B.C. The period of Zhou history before the move is therefore known as Western Zhou; the period after the move is called Eastern Zhou.

Eastern Zhou Dynasty
(771–221 B.C.)

In 771 B.C., the historical beginning of the Eastern Zhou dynasty, the Zhou kings were forced by nomadic invasions from the west to move their seat of government from the area of modern Xi'an to their eastern capital at Luoyang in present-day Henan Province. The move accelerated the political demise of the Zhou kings, who became mere ceremonial figureheads for regional feudal lords who exploited the unstable political situation to increase their personal power and territorial supremacy.

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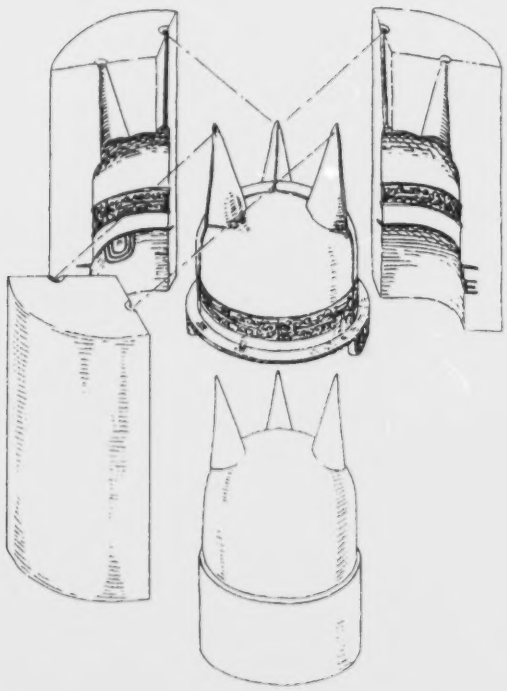
Late Eastern Zhou and Han Dynasties
(ca. 300 B.C.–A.D. 220)

The feudal society of the Eastern Zhou dynasty (771–221 B.C.) was characterized by constant conflict among local lords for personal power and territory. Attachment to worldly pleasures was accompanied by the search for immortality, which became a popular social obsession. As is often the case in times of political turmoil, there was a heightened interest in humanity and nature. Daoist teachings, founded by Lao Zi in the sixth century B.C., emphasized the all-pervasive power of nature and provided the ideal foundation. It was also during this period that the philosopher Confucius lived (551–479 B.C.). Confucius based his ethical philosophy of a society—in which virtue, moral perfection, and order were glorified—on rituals practiced since the Shang and Zhou dynasties. Those rituals served as the foundation for later Chinese philosophy, which in turn served as the underpinning of Chinese society for two thousand years.

During the Late Eastern Zhou and Han dynasties, awareness of territorial and cultural attractions beyond China's borders led to increased trade and expeditions westward. The eventual opening of the Silk Route through Central Asia ended ultimately in the Roman Empire. Non-Chinese goods and ornamental motifs and techniques increased in prominence. Entire religions were eventually imported, with Buddhism being the most influential and lasting of all.

Bronze Casting

The earliest Chinese cast-bronze vessels were made around 1700 to 1500 B.C. Bronzes were formed using clay sectional molds keyed to fit around a solid clay core. Decoration was carved into the inner wall of each mold section. Spacers held the sections at a given distance from the core and molten bronze was poured into the space. After the bronze had cooled, the mold was broken and removed. This section-mold method of casting resulted in decorative motifs being conceived and executed within the confines of each mold section, a factor that had a profound influence on the design.



Note: The ancient Chinese method of bronze casting is quite different from the lost-wax casting process which started with a wax model carefully coated with clay. In the lost-wax process the clay was baked to harden it, the wax would melt and run out, leaving a hollow space in the fired clay block. This would then be filled with molten bronze, which solidified to form a metal replica of the original wax model. This method has been widely used in the West since the fourth millennium B.C., but was not used in China until the Eastern Zhou dynasty.

Shang Dynasty Bronzes

The Anyang period, named after the Shang capitol at Anyang, lasted about two hundred years, from 1300 through 1100 B.C. It was an exceptionally productive time in Shang art. Large numbers of ritual vessels were made, prompted by increased demand due to the growing complexity of court and religious rituals. Vessel shapes were refined and decoration brought to the fore with the depiction of motifs in relief (see slides 1 and 2). Brief inscriptions cast on Shang bronzes in a handsome pictorial script were the modest beginnings for the lengthy inscriptions on vessels of the subsequent Western Zhou dynasty (ca. 1050–771 B.C.; see slide 4). The creativity and invention evident in the immense variety of shapes and ornaments on bronzes and jades from the Anyang period of the Shang dynasty make it one of the richest epochs in the history of ancient Chinese art.

Western Zhou Dynasty Bronzes

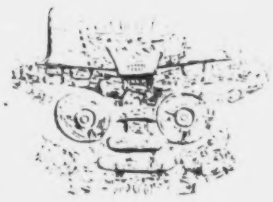
The Zhou adopted many of the customs and rituals performed by Shang predecessors and continued the tradition of bronze casting. The Zhou used many of the standard Shang vessel forms while modifying and introducing others. Bronzes of the Western Zhou dynasty bore elaborately detailed inscriptions that became almost as important as the vessel (see slide 4). Scholars believe that the emphasis on inscriptions indicates a change in the role of the bronzes: they were no longer used exclusively for state and religious rituals, but also as vehicles for glorifying worldly success and preserving it for posterity.

Eastern Zhou Dynasty Bronzes

The ritual bronze vessel, traditionally the monopoly of the ruling nobility, became the undisputed symbol of political prowess and courtly grandeur and was enthusiastically collected and commissioned by the feudal lords. The bronzes grew in number and size with the ambitions and political successes of their owners; ritual bronzes were also used more frequently in the daily functions of state and court festivities, and as tokens of good faith in diplomatic maneuvers.

With increased demand and patronage from contending feudal lords, the bronze-casting industry flourished. In addition to the traditional method of section-mold casting, other methods of manufacture were introduced: lost-wax casting and the cold metalworking techniques of hammering and folding sheets of metal. New decorative techniques were applied, with pattern blocks to replicate designs, and inlay and gilt to enhance the surface with color (see slide 5). Regional bronze-casting industries established during the preceding Shang and Western Zhou dynasties continued to flourish and, while certain vessel types and decorative motifs were common throughout the country, distinct regional characteristics also evolved.

Ancient Chinese Jade



Although the period from 1700 B.C. to A.D. 200 is known as the Bronze Age, an equally important and earlier artistic tradition is evident in the many fine jades of the period. The evolution of jades from objects of ritual significance and ornamentation to objects of aesthetic and spiritual value can be observed in the development of ancient Chinese jades.

Jade Working

Highly valued for its beauty and durability, jade has been worked in China for more than five thousand years. Jade is a hard mineral and therefore cannot be manipulated by metal tools. On the Moh scale, which is used to rate the hardness of minerals, jade is rated at about 6.5; a diamond, the hardest mineral, is rated at ten. That artisans created such delicate forms, intricate designs, and highly polished surfaces of these jade objects is remarkable given the difficult, time-consuming technique used to shape them. Simple grinding tools (cutting disks, drills, and polishers made of perishable material such as bamboo or wood) were used with hard mineral abrasives. Even today, jade-carving tools and techniques remain much the same as those used in ancient China.

Late Neolithic Jades

Jades from the late Neolithic period (ca. 5000–ca. 1700 B.C.) and the Shang dynasty were often used in burial and other rituals. The shapes of many ritual jades came from everyday tools like the ax and knife, but other forms, like the ritual disk and tube, had no known prototypes and their meaning remains unclear.

Zhou Dynasty Jades

The use of animal subjects for jade carving, which had become prevalent during the Shang dynasty, continued throughout the Zhou dynasty. These ornaments were thought to have been worn as pendants. By the sixth century B.C., artisans developed a new technique of creating jade designs in relief. Ornaments such as the dragon pendant were strung together in elaborate combinations with rectangles, arcs, birds, disks, and beads, and worn as necklaces or suspended from belts.

Late Eastern Zhou and Han Dynasty Jades

Toward the end of the Eastern Zhou dynasty and into the Han dynasty (206 B.C.–A.D. 220), the demand for luxury items and a heightened interest in humankind and nature expressed itself in art. Whole vessels were crafted in jade, and jade-working techniques reached unexpected heights of sophistication and perfection. The Han dynasty is especially noted for realistic animal and figural sculptures in jade, marking the beginning of a major trend that persisted throughout the following two thousand years.

Previsit Activities for Students

The previsit activities are designed to spark classroom discussion. They should be used as a brief homework or classroom assignment, and should be followed by classroom discussion and examination of the slides in this packet.

Archaeology
This activity encourages students to think about objects as documents with stories to tell. Students must consider what we can surmise about the use, ownership, and function of an object based on the material and form of the object. Students are asked to consider what additional information would help them explain who used the objects, and on what occasions they would have been used.

Form and Function
Much can be learned about the function of an object by studying its formal elements. This activity explores our use of containers in contemporary American society and highlights what makes them functional. After identifying the characteristics of various American containers, students are asked to examine the formal elements of ancient Chinese vessels and make suggestions about their functions.

ARCHAEOLOGY

A pair of archaeologists two thousand years from now have begun to excavate a site in North America. They discover that the following items have been miraculously preserved:

- a fine china plate
- a cut crystal wine glass
- a Styrofoam® cup inscribed with the word McDonalds®
- a set of cutlery made of plastic
- a glass pitcher
- a paper plate decorated with the words "Happy Birthday"
- a set of sterling silverware

You are an expert in the field. Help the archaeologists rank the objects according to their value in the 1990s, with the most valuable one first.

What criteria would you use to rank these objects?

Explain why one object is more valuable than another.

What might the value of each of the objects tell you about the people who used them?

What other criteria might you use to rank these objects?

Who do you think owned each of these objects? Explain your answers.

On what occasions do you think the objects were used? Explain your answers.

Do you think any of the objects were meant to be used together?

What additional information could help you rank these objects?

ARCHAEOLOGY
ANSWERS

A pair of archaeologists two thousand years from now have begun to excavate a site in North America. They discover that the following items have been miraculously preserved. You are an expert in the field. Help the archaeologists rank the objects according to their value in the 1990s, with the most valuable one first.

[Please note that this is only one possible ranking and is based on monetary value. Other rankings might be based on social or cultural values.]

a set of sterling silverware

a fine china plate

a cut crystal wine glass

a glass pitcher

a set of cutlery made of plastic

a Styrofoam® cup inscribed with the word McDonalds®

a paper plate decorated with the words "Happy Birthday"

What criteria would you use to rank these objects?

A number of criteria may be applied. The ranking given above is based on the monetary value of the materials from which the objects are made. Equally valid rankings may be made using other criteria such as the type or form of the object.

Explain why one object is more valuable than another.

The ranking given above is based on the monetary value of the object's material and its disposability.

What might the value of each of the objects tell you about the people who used them?

The monetary value of the object might give us a clue about the wealth and possibly the status of the person who used the objects.

What other criteria might you use to rank these objects?

Sentimental value

Historical value: value attributed to an object because of its role in a historical event (e.g., a vessel used as a trophy to mark an archery contest).

Value that is attributed to an object because of the person who owned it: a paper cup, for example, might be more "valuable" than a crystal glass if it had been owned by Michael Jackson.

Uniqueness: a vessel may be valuable because it is the only vessel of its type.

Do you think that any of the objects were meant to be used together?

Perhaps the silverware, china plate, wine glass, and pitcher were used together for a banquet. The plastic cutlery, Styrofoam® cup, and paper plate may have been used for a birthday picnic.

What additional information could help you rank these objects?

Where and when the objects were used.
Who owned and used the objects.

Form and Function

How does a vessel's shape determine how it can be used? Listed below are different uses to which vessels can be put. Match the vessel shapes to their possible uses. Give a reason for each of your answers.

1) eating from

2) drinking from

3) pouring liquids

4) heating food

5) heating liquids

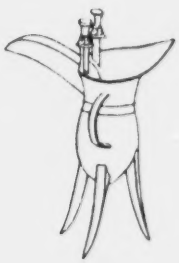
6) serving food

Use:

Reason:

Use:

Reason:



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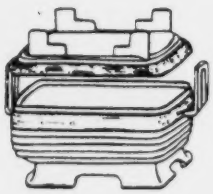


Use:

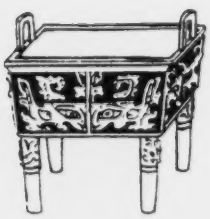
Reason:

Use:

Reason:

Use:

Reason:



Use:

Reason:

Use:

Reason:

Although the vessels have different shapes, it appears some of them served the same purpose. Can you think of any reason that vessels serving the same purpose would have different shapes?

Who do you imagine owned these vessels?

On what occasions do you imagine these objects were used? Explain your answers.

What additional information would help you clarify your answers?

Form and Function
ANSWERS

How does a vessel's shape determine how it can be used? Listed below are different uses to which vessels can be put. Match the vessel shapes to their possible uses. Give a reason for each of your answers.

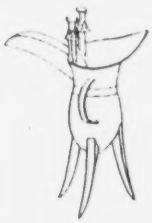
1) eating from
2) drinking from
3) pouring liquids
4) heating food
5) heating liquids
6) serving food

Use: pouring liquids

Reason: spout
handle
lid

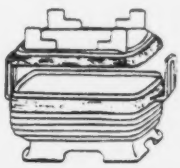
Use: serving food

Reason: bowl shape
handles
lid



Use: pouring liquids
heating liquids

Reason: spout
handle
legs



Use: serving food

Reason: handles
lid

Use: drinking from

Reason: flared lip

Use: serving food

Reason: large bowl
handles

Use: heating food

Reason: large bowl
legs
handles

Use: pouring liquid

Reason: handles
flask shape

Although the vessels have different shapes, it appears some of them served the same purpose. Can you think of any reason vessels serving the same purpose would have different shapes?

Each vessel shape may have a specialized function, perhaps for use in different rituals. In America, for example, tea and coffee pots serve similar but different specialized functions, and therefore have different shapes.

What additional information would help you clarify your answers?

Where and when the objects were used.
Who used and owned the objects.

Slides

Please Note

The questions accompanying the slides address the two themes of the packet: objects as historical document and artistic choices.

Form and Function
This slide activity repeats the information in the Form and Function activity sheet (see page 21).

Looking at Ancient Chinese Bronzes
Using the inquiry method, students come to understand the relationship between archaeological investigation and art historical analysis. Questions are designed to show how, through careful examination and intelligent questioning of the material, one can learn about the society from which an object comes. Students identify key factors that help archaeologists understand the significance of an object to the society that made it, such as scarcity of material, degree of craftsmanship, and numbers of people involved in the production process.

Slides

Form and Function

What is it about a vessel's shape that determines how it can be used?

Listed below are a number of different uses for vessels.

pouring liquids

storing liquids

storing food

serving food

ornamental object

Go through the slides with your students and match the vessel shapes to their possible uses. Be sure to discuss the size since this can be a clue to whether the vessel was functional or purely ornamental. The vessel's dimensions are provided and are highlighted. Give a reason for your answers.

Form and Function
answers

Slide 1

Ding
Ritual food container
Shang dynasty
15th–14th century B.C.
S1987.50

$8^{3}/_{16}$ x $6^{13}/_{16}$ x $6^{13}/_{16}$ x diam., $6^{11}/_{16}$ in.

Use: container for heating food

Reason: shape of vessel
broad bowl
three legs
size

Slide 2

You
Ritual wine container
Shang dynasty
13th century B.C.
S1987.23

$11^{7}/_{8}$ x $4^{3}/_{4}$ x $4^{7}/_{8}$ in.

Use: container for pouring liquids

Reason: shape of vessel
flared lip
lid
size

Slide 3

Ritual wine container
Zun
Shang dynasty
11th century B.C.
S1987.35

13 9/16 x 9 9/16 x 9 5/8 x diam. 8 15/16 in.

Use: container for pouring liquids

Reason: shape of vessel
flared lip
size

Slide 4

Ritual food container
Gui
Western Zhou dynasty
10th century B.C.
S1987.329

6 1/8 x 12 5/8 x 9 1/4 in.

Use: container for serving food

Reason: shape of vessel
broad bowl
size
handles

Slide 5

Ritual wine container
Hu
Late Eastern Zhou dynasty
3d century B.C.
S1987.896

5 x 3 9/16 x 3 1/2 in.

Use: ornamental container for liquid

Reason: flask-shaped vessel
size of vessel: too small to have been very functional.

Although the vessels have different shapes, it appears some of them served the same purpose. Can you think of any reason that vessels which serve the same purpose would have different shapes?

Each vessel shape may have a specialized function, perhaps for use in different rituals. In the West, for example, tea and coffee pots serve similar but different specialized functions, and therefore have different shapes.

Who do you imagine owned these vessels?

On what occasions do you imagine these objects were used? Explain your answers.

What additional information would help you clarify your answers?

Where and when the objects were used.

Who used and owned the objects.

Looking at Ancient Chinese Bronzes

Slide 1

Ritual food container
Ding
Shang dynasty
15th—14th century B.C.
$8^{3}/_{16}$ x $6^{13}/_{16}$ x $6^{13}/_{16}$ in. x diam. $6^{11}/_{16}$
S1987.50

Object as Historical Document

What do you think this vessel might have been used for? Explain your answer.

Who do you think might have used it? Why?

What do you think this vessel is made of?

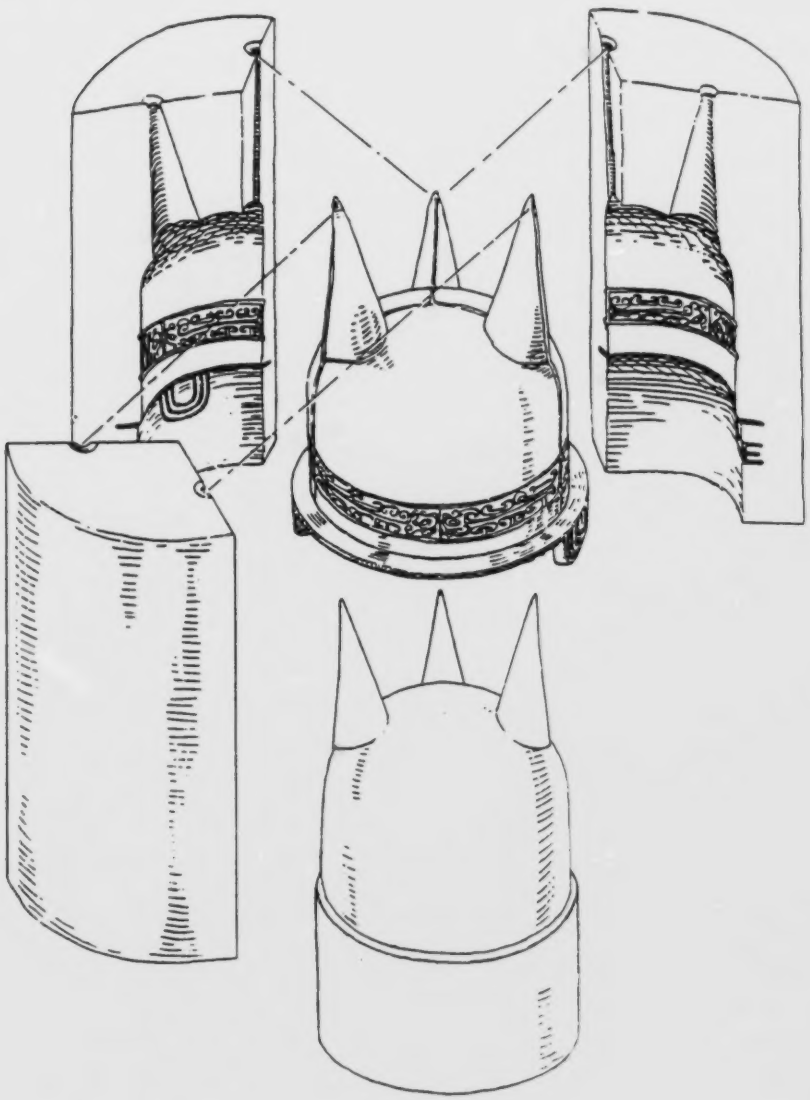
A metal called bronze.

Do you know what bronze is made of?

Bronze is a metal (alloy) formed by mixing melted ores of mostly copper and tin.

How do you think this vessel was made?

Ancient Chinese bronzes were made using clay sectional molds keyed to fit around a solid clay core. Decoration was carved into the inner wall of each mold section. Spacers held the sections at a given distance from the core, and molten bronze was poured into the space. After the bronze had cooled, the mold was removed. A number of separate mold parts had to be fastened together, but by arranging patterns carefully the Shang bronzesmith could conceal the joints.



Note: This method is quite different from the ancient Chinese lost-wax casting process that started with a wax model which was carefully coated with clay. In the lost-wax process the clay was baked to harden it, the wax would melt and run out, leaving a hollow space in the fired clay block. This would be filled with molten bronze which solidified to form a metal replica of the original wax model. This method has been widely used in the West since the fourth millennium B.C., but it was not used in China until the Eastern Zhou dynasty, or sixth century B.C.

How would this method of casting influence the character of the designs and the shape of the vessels?

The shapes of the vessels had to be such that they could be produced easily using the section-mold method. As a result decoration on the vessels are divided into distinct sections and were executed within the confines of each mold section.

Do you have anything made of bronze at home?

What does bronze look like when it is polished?

Bronze is shiny like a new penny.

What do you think this vessel looked like when it was first made?

We cannot be certain what this vessel originally looked like, but it is likely that the vessel was golden brown and had a high sheen. Since it was exposed to the corrosive elements in both soil and air, the outer layers have turned a grayish green. This discoloration is called a patina, and beautiful patination is much admired by scholars of Chinese bronzes.

How many people do you think were involved in making the bronzes?

We do not know how many people were involved in producing the bronzes but it is clear that large numbers were needed. Tasks involved in bronze production include mining mineral ores, smelting the ores to form bronze, making the clay molds, decorating the molds, and pouring the molten bronze into the mold. Finally, the bronzes would be "finished," which might have included filing rough seams and polishing the surface of the vessel.

Why is the material an object is made of an indicator of its value to the society for which it is made?

The material an object is made of may be difficult to extract, requiring time, energy, and skill to obtain. The amount of labor involved in obtaining the material usually affects the value of an object.

If an object is made of a scarce material, that material is often in limited supply and the object made from the material is therefore rare.

If an object is made of a material that is difficult to work and therefore requires a skilled artist to execute the work, the object is usually considered valuable.

Who do you think would be able to commission a vessel like this?

The person commissioning such a vessel would have to be wealthy and powerful, someone who was able to acquire a relatively rare material such as bronze, and to commission a skilled artist to work the material.

Does knowing about the complexity and skills involved in creating a bronze vessel give you additional clues about how the vessel would have been used and who would have used it?

We have a few more clues, but we do not have a complete picture.

What additional information would you need to help answer the initial questions and how would you get that information?

Written documents recording the use of the vessels would be extremely helpful, but unfortunately few written records exist for this time period in China. Some of the most important sources of information are the bronzes themselves which sometimes contain cast inscriptions (see slide 4). Contextual information, such as where the vessels were used and what other objects were found with the vessels, would provide additional information.

Contextual information is provided from archaeological investigations. Valuable information about the Shang dynasty, for example, has come from tombs, since the Shang buried objects to accompany the dead into the afterlife. Some of the most impressive examples of Shang art and ornaments have come from the royal tombs at Anyang. The Shang king was accompanied in death by precious articles, weapons, chariots, teams of horses, and human sacrifices so that he had plentiful equipment and servants in the afterlife. From the remains of Shang tombs we can tell the wealth of rulers and the significance of the bronzes in Shang society. Evidence from excavations suggests that most of the bronze vessels were used in religious, court, or burial rituals. Prized symbols of social and political status, the vessels represent the taste and demands of exacting patrons, primarily the ruling house and most powerful families. Only toward the end of the first millennium B.C. do we find a broader distribution of bronzes in society, leading us to believe that the vessels came to perform a more secular function.

Slide 2

Ritual wine container
You
Shang dynasty
13th century B.C.
11 7/8 x 4 3/4 x 4 7/8 in.
S1987.23

Object as Historical Document

What do you think this vessel might have been used for? Explain your answer.

Who do you think might have used it? Why do you think this?

Artistic Choices

How is this vessel decorated?

What patterns and designs do you see?

The dominant motif is an owl. You can see the striking eyes and sharp beak of the bird, and its ears and wings.

Another motif clearly visible above the eyes is a band of birds.

The entire vessel is covered in a dense spiral pattern.

The knob-handle of the lid is a bird's head.

Do you think that the bronze worker who made the vessel chose patterns that complement or detract from the vessel shape? Explain your answer.

The designs complement rather than detract from the vessel's functional shape.

The owl decoration on this vessel is described with care but is flattened and stretched across half of the vessel surface. This is not a vessel in the shape of an owl, but a vessel decorated with a stylized owl.

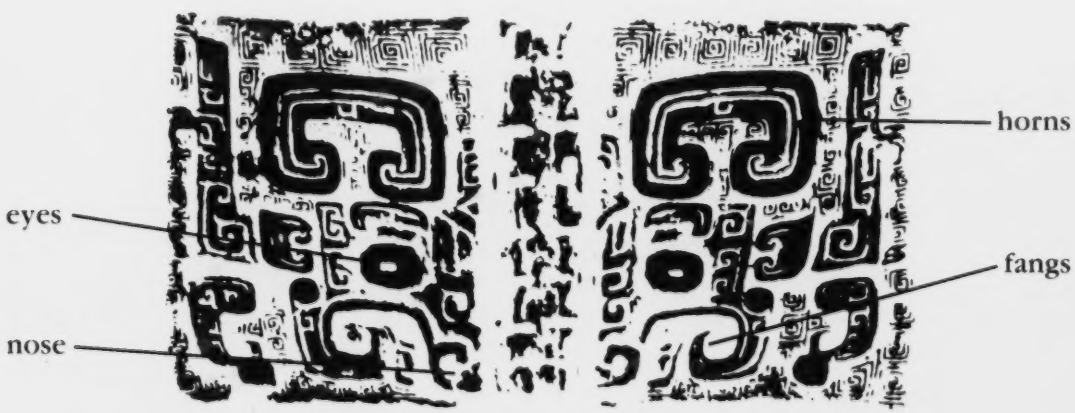
Slide 3

Ritual wine container
Zun
Shang dynasty
11th century B.C.
$13^{9}/_{16}$ x $^{9}/_{16}$ x $9^{5}/_{8}$ x diam. $8^{15}/_{16}$ in.
S1987.35

Artistic Choices

Can you find the masklike motif on the central section of this vessel?

Look closely because it is hard to see.
The eyes are the easiest to spot.



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Can you see another masklike motif?

There is another on the lower section of the vessel.

What other patterns and motifs can you see?

Do you think the bronze worker who made this vessel chose patterns that complement or detract from the vessel shape?

The architectural form and bold decorative detail together form an elegant union. The vessel is divided into three distinct sections: a splayed, conical foot; a narrow middle section; and a flared, trumpet-shaped mouth. The motifs are neatly fitted into these clearly defined sections. The main motifs are not just isolated from but are actually raised above the background spirals to produce an assertive design. An equally forceful outline is produced by the flanges, which run unbroken from the middle to just beyond the rim to emphasize the soaring trumpet shape of the mouth.

Slide 4

Ritual food container
Gui
Western Zhou dynasty
10th century B.C.
6⅛ x 12⅝ x 9¼ in.
S1987.329

Artistic Choices

Can you find a pair of eyes on this vessel?

There are several eyes on the vessel (see diagram).

Can you find a masklike motif?

There is a small mask in high relief on the upper band of the vessel, but it is not like the one we have seen on the previous slide. The masklike motif was common during the Shang dynasty, but during the subsequent Zhou dynasty the motif was not as widely used.

Are there other motifs on the bronze?

The two bold eyes belong to two separate birds who turn their heads away from one another and toward their elaborate tails. Bird motifs became increasingly popular during the Zhou dynasty, replacing the use of the masklike motif.

In the narrower horizontal band beneath the lip of the vessel there are elongated forms that are traditionally identified as dragons.

There are also animal heads on the handles.

Why do you think the artist placed the dragon form in the narrow band, and the birds on the bowl of the vessel?

The placement of the designs complements the shape of the vessel. The arching spirals of the birds' feathers would have to be squashed to fit into the narrow band, while the dragons would have to be stretched to fit the space available on the bowl. Alternatively, the vessel could have been designed a different shape to accommodate the motif in different places.

Object as Historical Document

Inside this vessel is the following inscription:

> In the sixth month, in the first quarter, the King was at Feng Jing. On the day *dingmao* the King commanded Jing to supervise archery. The sons and younger brothers of the nobles, the high and low officials, and the attendants studied archery. In the eighth month in the first quarter, on the day *gengyin*, the King and Wu [?] and Lu Wang with [officers from [?] and [?] and Bang Zhou had an archery contest at the Da Chi. Jing's training had been effective. The King presented Jing with an archer's armguard. Jing bowed his head and presumed to extol the Son of Heaven. He made this sacrificial *gui* for his mother Wai Ji. May sons and grandsons use it for ten thousand years.

Describe in your own words the reason Jing had this vessel made.

The reason given by Jing for making the vessel is that it is a gift for his mother after he won an archery contest. Jing, however, wants the vessel to be used "for ten thousand years."

What does the inscription tell you about the role of archery during the Western Zhou dynasty?

The ninety characters of the inscription describe archery as one of the socially acceptable pastimes for the elite of the Western Zhou dynasty.

What does the inscription tell you about the role of bronzes during the Western Zhou dynasty?

The inscription indicates that a subtle but important change took place in the role of the bronze vessel in society. The detailed recounting of the circumstances surrounding a royal gift to an archery trainer named Jing suggests that the bronze vessel—formerly used for state and religious rituals—had become a vehicle for glorifying worldly success and preserving it for posterity.

Slide 5

Ritual wine container
Hu
Late Eastern Zhou dynasty
3d century B.C.
5 x 3 9/16 x 3 1/2 in.
S1987.896

Artistic Choices

Compare the size of this vessel with the other four vessels you have seen.

What might the size of this vessel say about its function?

This vessel is only five inches tall whereas the others are all over ten inches. The size of the vessel suggests it was made as an ornamental object rather than primarily as a functional object.

Compare the decoration of this vessel with the other vessels you have seen.

Instead of animal motifs, this vessel is decorated with abstract silver swirls and gilded bands. The decoration, rather than being cast, is made of silver and gold inlays. Inlaying was a new decorative technique introduced during the Eastern Zhou dynasty.

Object as Historical Document

What do you think happened to the bronze casting industry to bring about these technical changes?

Decorating monochromatic bronze surfaces with colored inlays was a principal innovation of the Eastern Zhou dynasty. The trend emerged in response to the rise of two major new industries that flourished along the Yangzi River from the fifth through the third century B.C.: painted lacquered wood, and embroidered silks and textiles. The elegant scrolls inlaid with silver in this small container resemble the sweeping calligraphic patterns painted on lacquers, a correspondence that illustrates a lively exchange of ideas between different industries.

What social factors might explain the differences between this vessel and the other vessels you have seen?

The late Eastern Zhou and early Han dynasties saw a rise in the number of affluent and powerful households. The resultant demand for luxury goods produced a wealth of new materials. Most were ornately inlaid vessels made for grand festivities, and jewellike accessories for personal consumption, products that had little relation to the somber rituals of earlier dynasties. Luxury items, rather than the traditional ritual vessels, were the crowning artistic achievements of the time.

Ancient Chinese Art

Bowls with handles . . . tall goblets . . .

Jugs with pouring spouts . . .

Stones carved in perfect circles . . .

delicate birds . . . ornate belt hooks.

This exhibition is full of vessels and containers and decorative jades, some dating back three thousand years.

Use this activity guide to explore the exhibition and learn about ancient Chinese vessels and jade carvings.

Gallery Activities

FORM AND FUNCTION

As you go through the exhibition, see if you can find *at least* one vessel shaped like the ones shown below. Read their labels and write down what they were used for. The first one is filled in for you.

1) *Hu*–ritual wine container

2)

3)

4)

5)

47

Although the vessels have different shapes, it appears some of them served the same purpose. Can you think of any reason that vessels which serve the same purpose would have different shapes?

Who might have owned these vessels?

On what occasions do you imagine these objects were used? Explain your answers.

What additional information would help you clarify your answers?

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Form and Function
ANSWERS

As you go through the exhibition, see if you can find at least ***one vessel shaped like each example shown below. Read their labels and write down what they were used for. The first one is filled in for you.***

1) *Hu*–ritual wine container

2) *Ding*–ritual cooking vessel/food container

3) *Gui*–ritual food container

4) *You*–ritual wine container

5) *Zun*–ritual wine container

Although the vessels have different shapes, it appears some of them served the same purpose. Can you think of any reason that vessels which serve the same purpose would have different shapes?

Each vessel shape may have a specialized function, perhaps for use in different rituals. In the West, for example, tea and coffee pots serve similar but different functions, and therefore have different shapes.

What additional information would help you clarify your answers?

Where and when the objects were used.

Who used and owned the objects.

49

What Were They Used For?

FIND these vessels.
(HINT: They are in the first room of the exhibition.)

1)

2)

3)

EXAMINE the shapes of these vessels and look for clues as to how they were used. Complete the following descriptions of these vessels:

1) This vessel is tall/short. It is wider/narrower in the middle than at the mouth.

   I would use this vessel for _____.

2) This vessel has a wide/narrow mouth. It has _____ so that you can carry it. It has _____ legs. I think the legs were used to _____.

   I would use this vessel for _____.

3) This vessel has a _____ for pouring. It has a _____ so you can pick it up. It has _____ legs . I think the legs were used to _____.

   I would use this vessel for _____.

ANSWERS

1) CLUES: The body of the vessel is wide in the middle and narrow at the neck. It looks like a vase or a jug for holding a liquid. In fact, the shape is ideal for pouring, and it also helps prevent evaporation.

USE: a ritual wine container.

2) CLUES: This vessel has a wide mouth and a wide bowl. If you tried to carry liquid in this vessel, the liquid would easily spill out, so it was probably used for food rather than liquid. A fire or hot coals could be put under the vessel to keep the food warm.

USE: a ritual food container.

3) CLUES: The vessel has a spout like a jug so that it could be used to pour liquids. The three legs would allow hot coals to be placed under it to keep the liquid warm.

USE: a ritual wine container.

What Was That Used For?

FIND this blade.
(HINT: It is in the first room of the exhibition.)

CIRCLE the words that best describe this object:

hard soft shiny sharp fragile

delicate brittle cold warm decorative

heavy light dangerous heavy

What material is this object made of?
(HINT: The answer is on the label for the blade.)

_____

Which words would you have circled if the object had been made of polished metal?

_____

What do you think this object was used for?

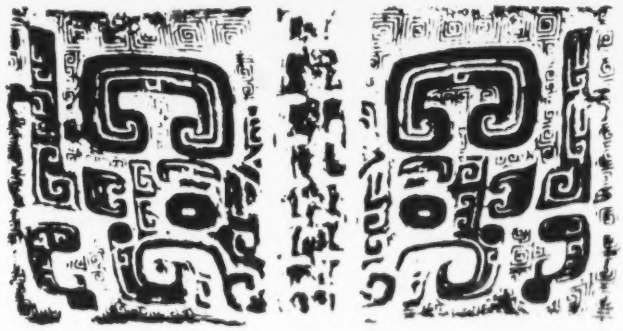
_____

ANSWERS

This blade is made of jade. Jade is a hard stone, but it also is brittle and breaks easily. Although the blade is the same shape as a metal blade, it would not have been used as a weapon because it is too fragile. The blade was used in ceremonies.

What Is A Motif?

A motif is a repeated design or pattern. Ancient Chinese-bronze masters used a variety of motifs to decorate the vessels they made. A masklike motif such as the one drawn below is often found on ancient Chinese bronze vessels.



FIND these two vessels.
(HINT: They are in the second room of the exhibition.)

1

2

DRAW arrows to point to all the masklike motifs you can find on these vessels.

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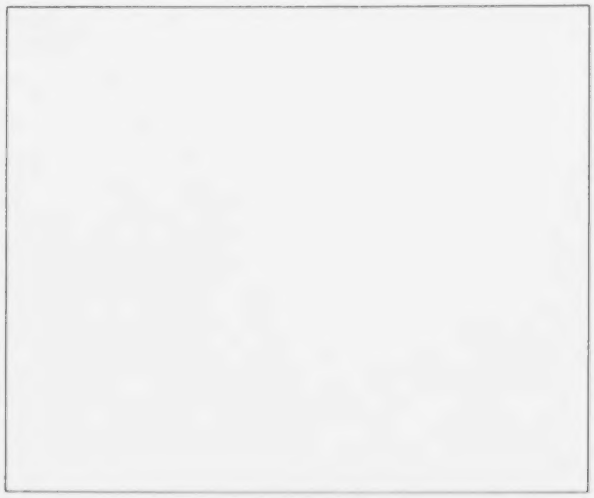
DRAW one masklike motif from vessel #1 and one from #2



Which one do you prefer?

_____

Why? _____

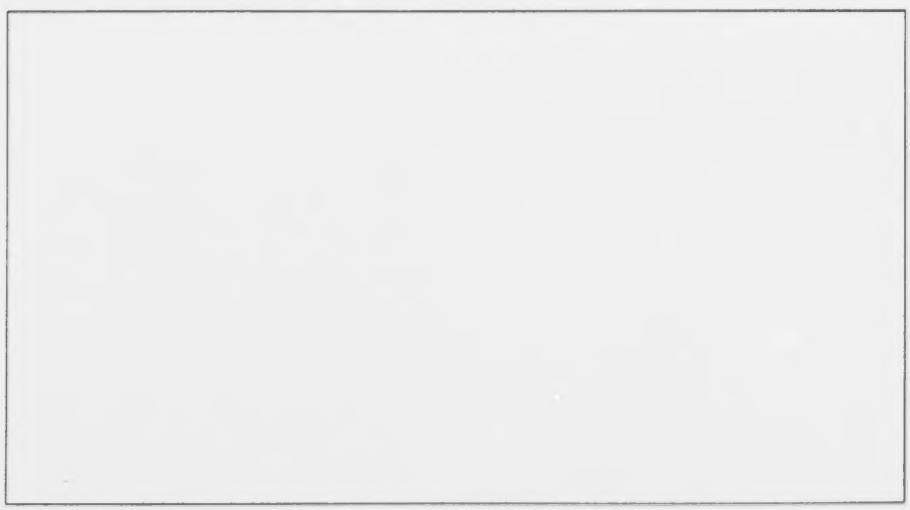
What Can I See?

FIND two other objects with masklike motifs on them in this room and **DRAW them below.**
(HINT: When you are hunting for the motif, keep watch for a pair of eyes. Sometimes the eyes are surrounded by a dense pattern of spirals that make the mask hard to see.)

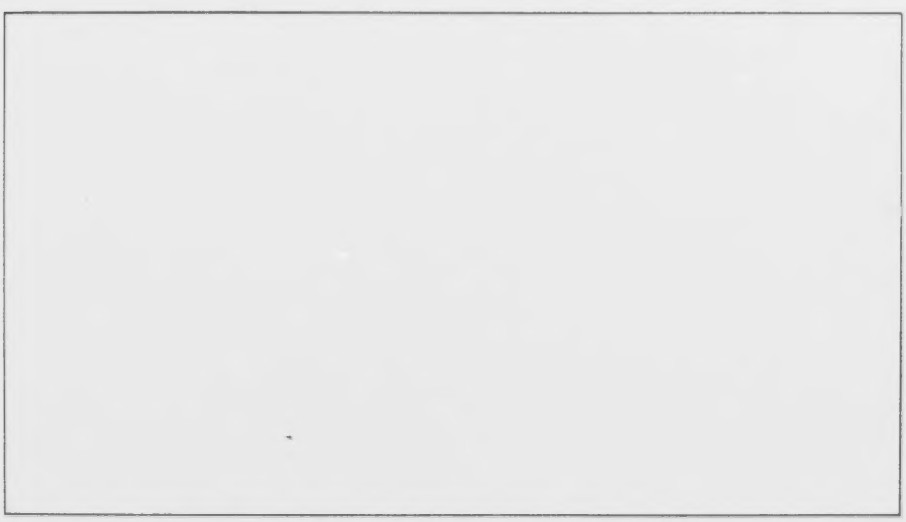
Did you find other motifs (repeated patterns) on the vessels?
DRAW two examples below.

Some of the most common motifs are animal patterns. Sometimes vessels are even made in the shapes of animals or birds. FIND a case with three bronze animals or birds in it in this room. Would you describe them as vessels in the shapes of animals, or vessels decorated with animals? Explain.

DRAW your favorite one.



FIND a bat, a fish, a duck, and a hare made of jade and **DRAW your favorite.**
(HINT: They are in the case to the left of the bronze birds and animal.)



Can You Read Ancient Chinese?

Ancient Chinese writing is different from the writing used in this booklet. Instead of using letters to make up a word, the ancient Chinese system of writing used a symbol, or *character*, to represent each word. Sometimes a picture represents a word. For example, the symbol ⊙ represents "sun." The ancient Chinese would carve words, names, and sometimes stories into the clay molds that were used to cast bronze vessels. These cast characters on bronze vessels are called *inscriptions*. The Chinese characters used today are different from ancient Chinese characters.

FIND this vessel.
(HINT: It is in the second room of the exhibition, and it is the left-hand object in the case.)

What do you think this *character* represents?

_____

_____

_____

This *character* is part of the *inscription* inside the vessel. How many times does it appear in the inscription? (HINT: The inscription is shown in a rubbing displayed over the vessel.)

_____

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What story do you think might be told in the inscription?

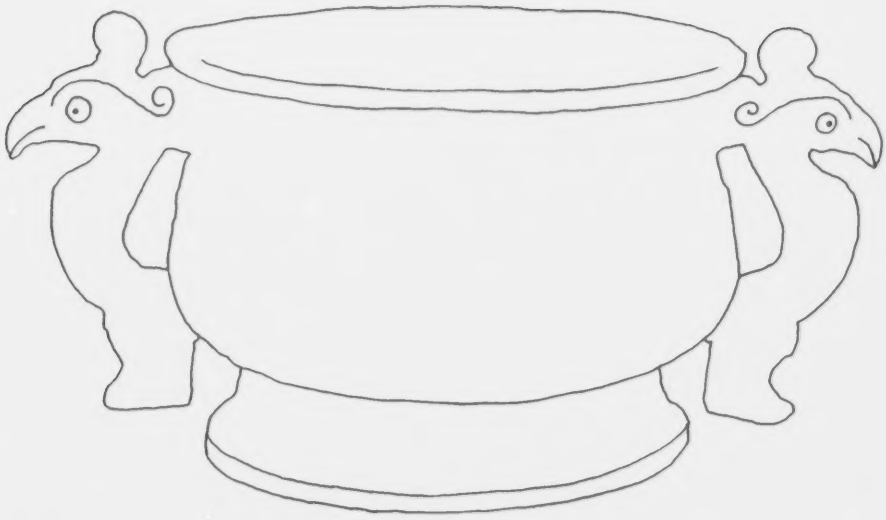
Can you think of any vessels used today that have writing on them? If so what are they used for?

ANSWERS

This character is a bow and arrow. You can read the translation of the entire inscription on the wall to the right of the object case. Vessels with inscriptions are often used as trophies in America today.

Eye, Eye!

FIND this vessel.
(HINT: It is in the third gallery.)



There are two large eyes on this vessel. **DRAW them in.**

What kind of creature do these eyes belong to?

_____

There is a similar creature on the vessel to the left. **DRAW it below.**

I like the vessel on the left/right best because

_____

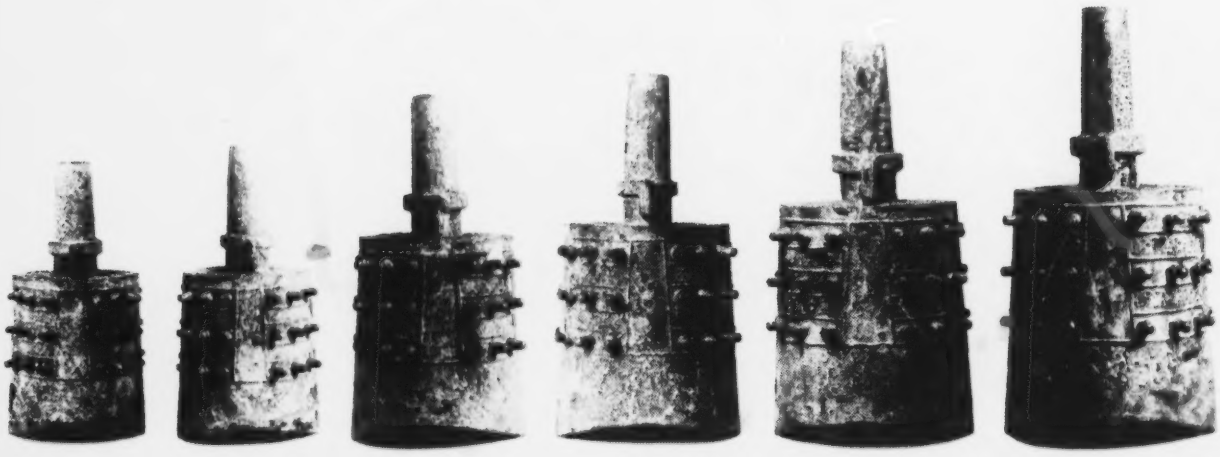
_____

ANSWER

The eyes belong to two birds.

Can You Imagine?

FIND these objects.
(HINT: They are in the fourth gallery.)



What do you imagine they were used for?

_____

_____

How do you think they were played?

_____

_____

What do you imagine they sounded like?

_____

_____

Do you think each bell made a different sound? If so how did the sounds differ?

_____

_____

ANSWERS

The six bronze bells were used to create music. Unlike many bells, these bells do not have a clapper inside. To ring the bells someone would strike them with a wooden hammer. The size of the bell determines its pitch. The large bell makes a deep sound, whereas the small bell makes a high sound. Each bell can play two notes depending on whether it is struck in the middle or on the side.

If you could choose one object from this exhibition to take home with you what would it be? Why?

Postvisit Activities for Social Studies Students

Note to Teachers

The postvisit activities are designed to encourage students to think about how scholars and historians learn about the past. Students will compare vessels from different dynasties and will be able to explain some of the factors that account for similarities and differences. Students will research information about a particular dynasty.

Create a large wall-to-wall paper timeline representing the Shang, Eastern Zhou, Western Zhou, and Han dynasties. Divide the class into four or eight groups and ask each to be responsible for a different dynasty. Ask the groups to illustrate their parts of the timeline showing examples of bronzes characteristic of that period. Ask each group to research the bronzes of the period and explain some of the factors that account for the similarities and differences among vessels of different dynasties.

Research your favorite dynasty.

Divide the class into two groups. Give each group a statement to complete.

Group 1: "Art history provides important information about China's past by . . . ."

Group 2: "Archaeology provides important information about China's past by . . . ."

Bring both groups together to compare how the statements have been completed. Discuss the role of art historians and archaeologists working together.

Postvisit Activities for Art Students

Note to Teachers

Postvisit art activities are designed to encourage students to think about the choices an artist must make in undertaking a creative project. Students will be able to describe how an artist synthesizes a number of factors to create a successful artwork. Students will consider the role of form, function, and decoration.

Present students with the following art problem: "Make a well-designed, functional container that can hold at least one cup of liquid from any of the art centers in the room." Set up centers of clay, leather, fibers, rocks, sticks, and grasses. Test the function of the vessel. Decorate the vessel. If time allows, redesign and improve the vessel.

Divide the class into two groups. Give each group a statement to complete:

Group 1: "Art history provides important information about China's past by . . . ."

Group 2: "Archaeology provides important information about China's past by . . . ."

Bring both groups together to compare how the statements have been completed. Discuss the role of art historians and archaeologists working together.

You are a bronze master and have been commissioned by the feudal lord who rules over the region to make a vessel to give as the prize to the winner of the local archery contest. The lord has told you that the vessel must be the best you have ever made and must impress the lords of the surrounding areas. These are the only guidelines the lord gives you. You must make all the artistic choices.

Draw or describe in words what the vessel will look like. Consider the following aspects:

It must be a suitable prize for an archery contest.

It must be impressive.

What type of vessel will you create?

Explain why this is an appropriate prize.

What will it be made of?

How big will it be?

What shape will it be?

Is the vessel functional?

Will it pour liquid, store food, or be used purely for decorative purposes?

What decorative motifs will you use?

Will you include an inscription?

What will the inscription say?

What message will people understand when they look at the vessel?

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(202) 357-1432
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Selected Films and Videos

The Arts of China

Ancient Chinese history is constantly being reevaluated as materials found in new archaeological excavations are discussed. Each of the films listed here reflects the understanding of Chinese history at the time the film was made; subsequent scholarship may have changed our interpretation of certain aspects of Chinese history.

Chinese History

Chinese History

A series of films on the history of China, each approximately 20 minutes in length, produced by Wan-go Weng.

1976, 16mm, color
$17.00 one week rental fee
Available from:

University of Illinois
Film Center
1325 Oak St.
Champaign, IL 61820
1-800-367-3456

Part 4: **The First Empires**—Han dynasty (206 B.C.–A.D. 220)
Part 5: **The Great Cultural Mix**—Northern and Southern dynasties (A.D. 420–589)
Part 6: **The Golden Age**—Sui and Tang dynasties (A.D. 581–907); porcelain, printing, civil service; industry, schools of thought
Part 7: **The Heavenly Khan**—A.D. 618–907; cultural exchanges between China and foreign countries.
Part 8: **The Age of Maturity**— Song dynasty (A.D. 960–1279)
Part 9: **Under the Mongols**—1279–1368; Mongols and the Ming dynasty
Part 10: **The Restoration**— Ming and Qing dynasties (1368–1911)
Part 11: **The Manchu Rule** 1644–1911; Qing dynasty through the Opium War.

The Ancient Chinese: An Introduction

no date, 16mm, color, 25 min.
$21.00 one week rental fee
Available from:

Yale University
East Asia Resource and Education Program
Box 13A Yale Station
New Haven, CT 06520
(203) 432-3429

An introduction to China's history and traditions. China's earliest civilizations, the origins and legends of the Shang, Zhou, Han, Tang, and Song dynasties and crucial events in the lives of Confucius, Huang Di, Marco Polo, and the Mongol conquerors are included.

Chinese Art

Masterpieces of Chinese Art

1973, 16mm and ½" video, color, 28 min.
$18.50/$7.00 five day rental fee
Available from:

Indiana University
Audio-Visual Center
Bloomington, IN 47405–5901
(812) 855-2103

Surveys works from the Chung-Shan Museum in Taipei. Includes ancient bronzes from the Shang dynasty, jade artifacts spanning 3,000 years, porcelain, lacquer, and calligraphy. Concludes with an examination of three paintings: "Travelers on a Mountain Path," by Fan Kuan; "Early Spring," by Kuo Hsi; "Early Snow on the River," by Chao Kan.

Chinese Bronzes

Chinese Art: Of Heaven, Earth and Man

1979, 16mm, color, 27 min.
$25.00 five day rental fee
Available from:

Indiana University
Audio-Visual Center
Bloomington, IN 47405–5901
(812) 855-2103

Covers major aspects of Chinese art and culture from the Shang dynasty (1700–1050 B.C.) through the Qing dynasty (1644–1911). Shows a wide range of works of art, from the primitive to the sophisticated, to demonstrate the dominance of four major groups: bronze, sculpture, porcelain, and painting. Interprets how the works reflect Chinese religious beliefs, beliefs about man and nature, views about the relationship between man and society, and ideas about the individual as distinct from society.

Chinese Culture

The Heart of the Dragon

A series of twelve, 57-minute videocassettes about life in the People's Republic of China today. Winner of the International Emmy Award for Best Documentary of 1984, it was filmed on location over an eighteen-month period in 1981–83.

1984, ½" video, color
$17.00 one week rental fee
Available from:

Yale University
East Asian Resource and Education Program
Box 13A Yale Station
New Haven, CT 06520
(203) 432-3429

Part 1: **Remembering**—Examines the significance of several great rulers in Chinese history.

Part 2: **Eating**—Explores food, diet and health, and the rituals that have sprung up over the centuries around the cultivation, preparation, and enjoyment of Chinese food.

Part 3: **Living**—A look at day-to-day existence in a rural mountain village.

Part 4: **Believing**—Explores the importance of Confucian thought in China; the ways in which the lessons of Buddhism and Daoism have been incorporated into daily life; and the persistence of a popular religion characterized by local or regional deities and rituals designed to appease supernatural powers.

Part 5: **Caring**—Scenes from inside a mental institution, hospital, and prison focus on attempts to care for the mentally and physically ill, and the criminal.

Part 6: **Marrying**—Provides an informative and entertaining look behind the scenes at a wedding in a rural community and an urban work-unit.

Part 7: **Mediating**—Through a divorce case, this film points out the importance of compromise and social harmony in China. It also reveals the dynamics of family relationships and the pressures created by the one-child policy.

Part 8: **Working**—Looks at the carefully structured and secure existence of China's industrial laborers.

Part 9: **Correcting**—Traces the workings of China's legal system as it follows the case of an accused catburglar. The film reveals in very human terms how the law is concerned with the values of social harmony and stability, and how it is enforced by inducing guilt and shame.

Part 10: **Creating**—Shows how the works of contemporary Chinese painters, poets, writers, and musicians reflect both traditional and Western influences yet retain a distinctly Chinese approach.

Part 11: **Understanding**—Demonstrates the roots of Chinese science in ancient philosophies.

Part 12: **Trading**—Sketches the history of China's business contacts with the West, from its beginnings along the overland Silk Route through the opening of China's ports after its defeat in the Opium Wars with Britain to present joint ventures.

Discover China and Tibet

1988, ½" video, color, 52 min.
$17.00 one week rental fee
Available from:

Yale University
East Asian Resource and Education Program
Box 13A Yale Station
New Haven, CT 06520
(203) 432-3429

An introduction to the geography of China and Tibet, this film combines spectacular landscapes with scenes of everyday life, and provides useful visual images that would supplement an introductory course to the geography, history, and culture of China.

A City of Cathay

1960, ½" video, color, 27 min.
$7.00 five day rental fee
Available from:

Indiana University
Audio-Visual Center
Bloomington, IN 47405–5901
(812) 855-2103

Presents the people of the Song dynasty in everyday activities in old Cathay through the use of a photographic representation of a Chinese scroll painting.

The Forbidden City

1973, 16mm, color, 43 min.
$21.00 one week rental fee
Available from:

Yale University
East Asian Resource and Education Program
Box 13A Yale Station
New Haven, CT 06520
(203) 432-3429

A beautifully photographed tour of the Gu Gung, the palace of China's emperors from 1411 through 1911, and now a museum. Follows a Chinese family on a visit as they walk through the palace, per-

sonal chambers, gardens, and treasure house. The family's tour is used as a vehicle for exploring Chinese history and attitudes towards the past. This was the first U.S. documentary filmed in China after 1948.

Xi'an

1980, 16mm, color, 57 min.
$32.50 three day rental fee
Available from:

Pennsylvania State University
Audio-Visual Services
Special Services Building
University Park, PA 16802
(814) 865-6314

Presents a cultural history of the ancient Chinese imperial city of Xi'an, once the greatest capital in the world. Visits several important archaeological sites, including the tomb of Qin Shi Huang Di, where a huge army of terra cotta soldiers was uncovered. Produced by Sue Yung Li and Shirley Sun.

One Village in China

A series of three, 58-minute films/videos on rural life in contemporary China. There is also a 29-minute version of **Small Happiness** available.

16mm and 1/2" video, color
$90.00/$75.00 one week rental, negotiable
Available from:

New Day Films
121 W. 27th St.
Suite 902
New York, NY 10001
212/645-8210

Part 1: **Small Happiness** (1984) Though women have made significant advances in rural Chinese society, many traditional attitudes continue to shape life in the village of Long Bow. Dozens of Long Bow women speak openly about love and marriage, childbearing and birth control, their fight for better jobs, and the practice of foot-binding.

Part 2: **To Taste a Hundred Herbs** (1985) A village doctor's story provides insight into medical and religious practices in Long

Bow. Dr. Shen Fasheng, descended from more than six generations of country healers, uses a mix of traditional Chinese medicine and Western medical practices to treat the mental and physical illnesses of Long Bow residents.

Part 3: **All Under Heaven** (1986) The episode presents the history of Long Bow over several decades, through the Revolution in 1949, collectivization during the early 1950s, the Great Leap Forward in 1958, and the present shift from collectivized farming to individual household farming. Personal stories reflect how the traditional way of life has persisted and yet been altered by the political changes of the past forty years.

Glossary and Pronunciation Guide

(Pronunciation in parentheses.)

alloy	A substance composed of two or more metals united by being fused together and dissolving in each other when molten.
bronze	An alloy of copper and tin.
character	The Chinese system of writing uses one character to stand for each word.
ding	A ritual food container for cooked food with a round body and three legs. *Ding* were used throughout the Shang and Zhou dynasties.
Eastern Zhou (Eastern jo)	Eastern Zhou dynasty (ca.771–ca.221 B.C.)
gui (gway)	A ritual food container. During much of the Shang dynasty, *gui* seem to have been made without handles; from the late Shang and throughout the Zhou dynasties most *gui* had two handles.
Han (hahn)	Han dynasty (206 B.C.–A.D.220)
hu (who)	A ritual wine container. Such ritual wine vessels were used singly from the Shang dynasty. During the late Western Zhou dynasty much larger *hu* were used in pairs.
inscription	Character or characters inscribed on a bronze vessel.
Neolithic	Neolithic refers to the time period characterized by the use of polished stone. The late Neolithic period in China dates from circa 5000 to circa 1700 B.C.
patina	A green film formed naturally on bronze by long exposure to the elements. The patina of a Chinese bronze is often valued aesthetically for its color.
pinyin	The pinyin romanization system, introduced by the Chinese in the 1950s, has now largely replaced the older Wade-Giles romanization system and the place-name spellings given in the *Postal Atlas of China*.

Qing (ching)	Qing dynasty (1644–1911)
Shang	Shang dynasty (1700–1050 B.C.)
Song	Song dynasty (A.D. 960–1279)
Tang (tahng)	Tang dynasty (A.D. 618–907)
Wade-Giles	See pinyin.
Western Zhou (Western jo)	Western Zhou dynasty (ca. 1050–771 B.C.)
Xia (shah)	The Xia dynasty is said to predate the historical Shang dynasty (ca. 1700–ca. 1050 B.C.). Remains of the Xia dynasty have not been found.
you (yoh)	A ritual wine container with an S-shaped profile, a lid, and a long U-shaped handle. In use from the late Shang dynasty until the middle Western Zhou dynasty.
Yuan (y'wahn)	Yuan dynasty (1271–1368)
Zhou	Zhou dynasty (1050–221 B.C.)
zun	A ritual wine container with a widely flared lip, supported on a splayed conical foot.

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Chronology

	Neolithic period	ca. 5000–ca. 1700 B.C.
	Shang dynasty	ca. 1700–ca. 1050 B.C.
	Zhou dynasty	ca. 1050–221 B.C.
	Western Zhou	ca. 1050–771 B.C.
Bronze Age	Eastern Zhou	770–221 B.C.
	Spring and Autumn period	770–481 B.C.
	Warring States period	480–221 B.C.
	Qin dynasty	221–206 B.C.
	Han dynasty	206 B.C.–A.D. 220
	Three Kingdoms	220–265
	Jin dynasty	265–420
	Northern and Southern Dynasties	420–589
	Sui dynasty	581–618
	Tang dynasty	618–907
	Five Dynasties	907–960
	Song dynasty	960–1279
	Northern Song	960–1127
	Southern Song	1127–1279
	Yuan dynasty	1279–1368
	Ming dynasty	1368–1644
	Qing dynasty	1644–1911
	Republic	1911–
	People's Republic	1949–